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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: December 30, 1948

SUBJECT:

HR-M 129 901030  
Date 4/10/71

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PARTICIPANTS:

Sir Harold Caccia, British Ambassador  
Mr. Merchant, Assistant Secretary, European Affairs

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After dinner I had the opportunity to talk at some length  
alone with Caccia. At the outset he assailed me in standard form  
on this matter of

I fended him off in standard form.

We then discussed Paragraph D of the Berlin contingency  
instructions. I told him of my conversation with Alphand and  
said that I did not see how we could hold off very long on  
tripartite discussion here. He agreed and said that they were  
speeding up their processes. He said that he would be prepared  
to meet tripartitely on Monday.

Caccia then went into the substance. I agreed with his  
conclusion that the logical end of the series of steps we envisaged  
was a willingness to risk general war over Berlin. He was extremely  
dubious that our NATO allies would face up to this. He seemed  
equally dubious that British public opinion could be united to  
accept this risk. We argued at some length. My emphasis was that  
the facing and acceptance of the risk in advance by those who had  
the power and responsibility was the most effective guarantee that  
the risk would not in fact materialize.

RM/R

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